



FCC Rural Wireless Initiatives

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Congressional Rural Caucus Hearing
Washington, DC
November 17, 2004



FCC Rural Wireless Initiatives

- Increase spectrum access and flexibility
- Rural-focused spectrum policies
 - Licensed and unlicensed spectrum initiatives
 - Secondary markets
- Encourage rural wireless deployment
 - Universal Service programs
 - Auction bidding credits
- Information/outreach to rural providers and communities
 - Joint FCC/RUS initiatives

Promoting Rural Spectrum Access

- Flexible regulation of power levels in less populated areas
 - Applies to both licensed and unlicensed spectrum
- Expanded use of secondary markets and easements to promote rural spectrum access
- Consider rural needs in defining geographic license areas
 - Smaller license areas – rural service providers can obtain spectrum tailored to areas they serve
 - Larger license areas – economies of scale and scope can be leveraged to benefit rural service





Rural Report and Order

(adopted July 2004)

- Expand the availability of wireless services in rural areas by
 - Eliminating disincentives to serve or invest in rural areas
 - Helping to reduce the costs of market entry, network deployment, and continuing operations
- Increases permissible power levels in rural areas
- Enables satisfying of licensing requirements through rural buildout
- Allows cellular RSA cross-investment, subject to FCC review
- Allows licensees to grant security interests to the Rural Utilities Service

Unlicensed Spectrum

- FCC has opened multiple bands (e.g., 2.4 GHz, 5.8 GHz) to unlicensed use
- Unlicensed bands are well-suited to low-power, high-bandwidth wireless applications
 - “Open access” model reduces entry costs
 - Lack of interference protection places premium on spectrum efficiency and robust technology
- Unlicensed use may be particularly suitable for rural areas because lower user density reduces interference risk



Joint Federal Rural Wireless Outreach Initiative

- Joint initiative of the FCC Wireless Bureau and the USDA Rural Utilities Service
 - Launched July 2003
- Objectives
 - Encourage greater access and deployment of wireless services to enhance economic development throughout rural America
 - Work jointly with rural governments, businesses, and consumers
 - Coordinate rules and regulations affecting rural wireless services
 - Develop a joint Model Wireless Broadband Community Project.



Rural Wireless Community VISION Program

- New WTB/RUS program will provide technical assistance to selected rural communities seeking to deploy wireless broadband service
 - Successful deployments will serve as models for other rural communities
- Program selection based on community-submitted essays describing vision for wireless connectivity
 - Applications due to WTB/RUS December 1, 2004
- WTB and RUS will send staff to the selected communities to assist community and business leaders
 - WTB will provide regulatory, engineering, legal and technical support
 - RUS will provide financial and telecommunications expertise of their loan-grant officers and regional field representatives

Thank You!

- For more information
 - FCC website: www.fcc.gov
 - WTB website: wireless.fcc.gov
 - FCC Rural Telecom website:
www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural
 - WTB/RUS Outreach:
 - wireless.fcc.gov/outreach/ruralinitiative
 - www.usda.gov/rus/jointoutreach
 - VISION Program:
wireless.fcc.gov/outreach/ruralvision